



A Sermon Preached
before the Honourable
house of Commons, at
their first publike Fast.

2 CHRON. 15. 2.

*The Lord is with you while yee bee with him, and if yee
secke him hee will be found of you: but if yee forsake
him, he will forsake you.*



This portion of Scripture is a part of
a Sermon preached to the whole
body of the Kingdome of Iudah;
and as after I doe not know in all the
Bible to bee preached upon the like
Representative body of a Christian
State; especially upon a day when
they are drawing nigh to God. The more inexcusable
should I bee in adventuring to shew my weaknesse at
this time, in this place, were I not able to call the most
High

Introdu-
tion set-
ting forth
the fir-
minesse of
the Text

Introdu-
tion.

Amos 7.

14. 1.

Ezr. 8. 2.

Ve. 22.

2. The
State of
the Iewish
Church,
which oc-
casioned
the Text.

Chap. 14.

2. 3. 4.

High to witnesse, that nothing but conscience of my duty kept me (with *Iosab*) from running away from the Lords work. But *Amos* the *heardsman* must prophesie at the Kings Chappel when God commands him.

The speciall end of your meeting this day, is to *afflict your souls before God*, that so with *Ezra* you might *seeke a right way* for your selves, and the weighty affaires of his Majesty, and the whole State: and the speciall errand I have to deliver from the Lord, is to assure you of the same truth, although in other words, which *Ezra* told the *Persian Emperour*, that *the hand of God is upon them for good that seek him; but his power and wrath against all them that forsake him*, viz. That *God wil be with you, while you be with him*.

Which text that you may the better understand, give me leave to carry you a little back, & give you a plain view of the state of the Church of *Judah* at that time. In the dayes of *Rehoboam* there had been an horrible apostasie from the purity of Gods worship: Religion was very much corrupted, and the forces of the Kingdom were exceedingly weakened. And in *Abijahs* time things grew worse & worse. But now when *Asa* (being a godly man) came to the Crown, he begins at the right end, and makes it his first worke to set upon reformation of Religion, taking away the *Altars of the strange Gods* & the *high places*, *brake down the Images*, *cut downe the Groves*, *commanded Judah to seeke the Lord God of their Fathers*, and to doe the *Law and the Commandements*, casting out what soever was a stench in the Lords nostrills, and he prospered in what soever he put his hand unto.

This done, he then calls all his Nobles, and Princes, and Elders together, and tells them that they had sought

sought the Lord in matters of Religion, and God had
beene found of them, and that they now should goe
and fortifie the Kingdome; and so they did in all the
Cities and prospered. But in the midst of this worke
comes out Zerah the *Cushite*, the *Ethiopian*, (or rather
the *Arabian*, *Ethiopia* lying beyond *Egypt*) with an ar-
my of a thousand thousand, and three hundred Chariots,
(it may be the greatest Army that ever you read of in
any story) with these he breakes in suddenly upon *Asa*.
But he humbles himselfe before God, betakes himself
to prayer, tells the Lord that it was *all one with him to*
help by many or few. And in the Lords name hee went
out to encounter with that huge Army, over which
the Lord gave him a glorious victory, and the spoyle
of the enemies Countrey to boot.

Introduc-
tion.

Verse 7.

Now as they were comming backe to *Hierusalem*,
the Lord calls out *Azariah the sonne of Obed*, to make
the gratulatory oration for their safe return and con-
quest, in these words that I have read, and so forward
to verse the eighth; and so I am come to my Text.

3 The co-
herence
and Ana-
lysis.

In which (that I may make as briefe a way as I can
possible to the matter that I shall insist upon) two
things are to be unfolded.

First, the scope and intent of the Prophet, and that
is laid downe in the latter end of his speech, *Be strong*
therefore, and let not your hands be weak: that is, goe
on with the good work of Reformation of Religion,
wherewith you were in hand before the enemy inter-
rupted you.

Verse 7.

Secondly, the arguments whereby this is pressed, &
they are two.

The first is taken from their *own present happinesse*,
who were in Gods wayes: *The Lord is with you while*

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on. — yee are with him, and if yee seeke him, he will be found of
you: but if yee forsake him he will forsake you.

The second is taken from the *misery* of the ten Tribes who were out of Gods way, concerning whom hee speakes to this effect, *that for a long time Israel* (that is, the ten Tribes) *had bin without God, and without a teaching Priest, and without Law*: and as they had cast off God, so God had cast off them, howbeit, if they would have sought to God, and turned to him, God would have bin found of them: but they going on in the way of desperate Apostacy, the Lord vexed them every where, in the City, in the Country, in the Family, every wher God was too strong for them, (as certainly God will make every one to know that hee hath a hard match to encounter with, that dares to beare Arms against the Lord.) And so from their *misery* he presseth *Aja* and his people to goe on in the right course, to prevent the like for comming upon themselves.

This second argument of the *Misery* of the tenne Tribes belongs not to my worke.

4 The di-
vision.

I betake my selfe therefore to the other, wherein I shall spend the allotted time for this exercise, namely, The *present happinesse* of the Church of the *Jews* that were in Gods way: in which observe these two things.

First, what the *happinesse* was that they enjoyed, in these words, *The Lord is with you*.

Secondly, the *Condition* upon which they enjoyed this *happinesse*, or the termes upon which they held it; and that is,

First more generally propounded; *The Lord is with you, while you are with him*.

Secondly, more particularly and exegetically expounded in the next words, *If yee seeke him, he will be*.

be sould of you; but if yee forsake him, he will forsake you. *The Church's happiness.*

I begin with the first of them, *The present happiness of the Church of the Iews, Iehovah is with you.* Where there is but one question to be answered for the clearing of the Doctrine, that I shall a while insist upon, & that is, *what presence of God is here intended by the Prophet? Iehovah is every where; Whither shall I goe from thy presence?* Nay, he is not onely present every where,

but he manifests his presence every where, every herbe shewes it, all the Creatures speake God in them. Nor onely so, but oft times the manifestation of Gods presence is the torture and misery of the people to whom he is present. In *Isa 33. 14.* when God sends them word that he would come among them, presently it follows, *The sinners in Zion are afraid, fearfulness hath surprized the Hypocrite, who among us shall dwell with devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?* And in *Ier. 4. 23.* The Prophet beheld the earth, and loe it was without forme, and voyd; the mountaines, and loe they trembled; the nations, and they were wasted to nothing: what was the reason? because of the presence of the Lord. What presence then is here intended?

For that, through Gods providence, the mornings worke hath saved me part of my labour. For in effect the presence intended in this Text is Gods presence in the Covenant of grace, in which he is so joyned with a people, that they also are joyned unto him. God to be joyned with a people, and to be in Covenant with them in the Scripture-phrase is all one. So that the Lesson which it affords us is this.

The presence of God in his Covenant of grace with any people, is the greatest glory, and happiness that they can enjoy.

The Church's happiness. The first part. viz. The happiness of the Church. Psal. 139. 7. &c.

Ier. 50. 5. Iai, c. 3. 6. DoB. 13.

The Church
cher hap-
pinesse.

The Prophet here encouraging them to go on and to feare nothing, useth onely this sentence, that God will be with them: As if he had said, you shall have all the happinesse that you can wish, *God will be with you.*

In prosecuting this point, I shall endeavour two things.

First, to demonstrate the trueth of it out of the Scripture.

The hap-
pinesse of
the Church
proved, 1
by Scrip-
ture.

Secondly, to make a brieve application of it:

For the first, see how cleare it is in the Scriptures, in *Deut. 4. 7, 8.* *Moses* speaks of the *Israelites* after this manner: *What Nation (in all the world) is so great as thou art? all their neighbours should say, surely this is a great people, a wise, a happy people: I pray you what was their condition when Moses thus magnified them? there were 600000 men of them in a desolate, barren, howling wilderness: There was not one house for a man to hide his head; but only floating Tents, some covered with cloathes, some with boughes: No land that either they could sow, or plough, or reap: No trading; hardly a man that had two suites to his backe, (but as some thinke) as their bodies grew, their cloaths grew: as their feete grew, their shooes grew: wherein then was their happinesse? Mark what Moses saith, vers. 7, What Nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them as the Lord our God is in all things, &c? There was their happinesse, that *Iehovah* was nigh them, and marched up and downe before them. So you shall see in *Exod. 33.* the Lord was offended with the people for making of the golden Calf; In the beginning of the Chapter he speaks after this manner to *Moses*. *Take this people, and carry them to the Land that I have promised to give them: It is a Land flowing with**

Deut: 9. 8

with Mille and Honey. I will send my Angell before you, He shall drive out all the Nations, and plant you in that goodly Countrey: onely I my selfe will not goe with them, for I shall bee so farre provoked by their finnes, that I shall fall upon them suddenly, and consume them. But my Angell shall not leave them till they bee settled in that good Land. One would have thought that this had been an excellent offer, thousands would have esteemed it a glorious thing to have an Angell of God to goe and plant them in the goodliest Countrey that was under the cope of heaven. But, marke how Moses takes it. O Lord, rather kill us all in the Wildernesse, let us never stirre a foote, if thy presence goe not with us. I pray thee, if I have found favour with thee, goe with us thy selfe: wel, saith God, my presence shall goe. Moses presseth againe, let it bee that or nothing: For wherein else shall it bee knowne to the world, that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight? Is it not in that thou goest with us? So shall we be separated, I and thy people from all the people that are upon the face of the Earth. This is the summe of that Chapter. Againe you shall finde in Psalme 46. and Psalme 48. David strangely magnifies Hierusalem above all the Cities in the world: Excellent are the strains of Rhetoricke flowing from the Spirit of God in setting forth the glory of that City, which in a word was such, as All Kings of the Earth should come and looke on, and stand amazed at it. Without question, Babylon, or Nineveh excelled Hierusalem in Davids time for outward glory, as farre as the City of London doth one of our meane Countrey-Townes. What was the glory of Hierusalem then? You shall reade in those Psalmes

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cher happiness.*

Psalmes, God was with him. God is in the midst of her : God is knowne in her Palaces. And every where this is the thing he cries up : it was a glorious place, because Iehovah was there.

And in *Psalme 144.* The Pen-man of it so farre extols even the common mercies that GOD oft times bestowes upon a People, that they then become Blessed. *When their sonnes grow up as plants, and their Daughters as the corners of the Temple, polished after the manner of a Palace ; their Garners affording all store, their Oxen strong to labour ; that there is no breaking in, and carrying into Captivity. Blessed, saith hee, are the people that are in such a case. But marke how hee gives a dash to all hee had said, in comparison of that hee had to say of the blessednesse of Gods people, Yea, rather happy are the people whose God is the Lord. You shall see also in the latter end of Ezechiel, Chapter 40. and in Revelation 21. such an hyperbolicall description of a most glorious City, the new Hierusalem, as never had parallel. And what is the glory of that City ? Read but the last words in the Prophecie of Ezechiel, The name of that City from that day shall bee THE LORD IS THERE. As if hee had said, would you have an abridgement of all the excellencies of this Cirie and Temple ? This is it, Iehovah is there. And in Revelation 21. The Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are there.*

On the other side you shall see it as plaine, when the Lord threatneth the greatest plague and curse that can betide a Nation, he never mentions other, above this, that Hee will *depart from them* : as if hee had meant to strike them dead at a blow, by saying, *Hee will*

will leave them. That place in *Hosea* Chapter 9. 11. is very remarkable: *As for Ephraim* (that is, the Children of *Israel*, the ten Tribes) *his glory shall flee away as a bird*; that is, suddenly, swiftly, irrecoverably, he shall be utterably undone. What is the matter? The next verse tells you, *Woe unto them when I depart from them*. If God goe, woe comes; all goes, if God goe. It is a knowne story in the *1 Samuel* 4. that when the Arke (that was called the *Glory of God*) the visible token of Gods presence in the Covenant of Grace, was taken Captive by the *Phylishtines*; as *Phineas* his Wite bowed her selfe and travelled, and though they after told her that a *Man-child* was borne, she regarded it not, but called his name *Ichabod*, saying *The glory is gone*; because then Gods presence departed from them.

What neede I say any more? The worke of the *Incarnation* of the Sonne of God, and the *Redemption* of the World by him, was such, that one maine end of making this goodly frame of Heaven and Earth was, that it might be the stage upon which that Work should bee acted. A worke wherein not onely all mans happinesse lies, and whence it flowes; but wherein all Gods Attributes are glorified to the highest; and for which the Church Triumphant shall thinke Eternity short enough to praise God. Of this worke (I say) the summe is given in one word, *Immanuel God is with us*.

And plaine Reason may demonstrate that it must needs be so. What is *glory*, but the shining out of excellencie? What is *happinesse*, but the fruition of the greatest good? Now there is no excellencie that shines out in any thing, like to that which beames

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2 Cor. 3.

out from God in the Covenant of grace to his people. There is no *good* that any people can enjoy like the fruition of God in that Covenant. It is true, God manifests himselfe to all the Nations in the World (*in him they live, and move, and have their being*: yet it is as in a darke Cloud, they grope after him, and cannot feele him; but in the Covenant of grace men behold *him with open face*, like the Sunne shining in his strength, as though a *Mirroure*: Such a Mirroure as the Prince of *Orange* had, that would shew the sunne in his full bignesse and beauty. Thus God shines in the Covenant of Grace.

The Prince is virtually present in all places of his Kingdome, but his *Court* is his *Glory*: So where God is in his Covenant, there *Heaven* is: therefore this is usually in the Scripture phraise called the *Kingdome of Heaven*.

But if yet more particularly you require, what *Gods presence in his Covenant* implyes: As he, who being askt what God was, required first a *day*, then two, then three; alledging, that the more he studies it, the lesse able hee found himselfe to answer it. So the more I thinke of this, the more unable I see my selfe to make a satisfactory answer: what I can, take thus; To the Nation of the *Iewes* it implied something which concernes not us, but mystically or analogically: As to have the *Arke*, *Vrim* and *Thummin*: To have God to reveale himselfe in *Visions* and *Dreames*: To answer by *Thunder*, &c. which my hast allowes me not leisure to explaine. But to them, and to al other people *Gods presence* in the *Covenant of grace* implyes these three things.

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plained, to
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1 Of Gods
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First; the owning and acknowledging of them to
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be his owne separated people, knit to him in a league of love: he is *their God*, they are his *people*; they have a propriety in God, & God hath a propriety in them, so that they may say of Him, *This God is our God*; and God of them, *This people is my people*. Now this is the greatest happinesse, nothing can exceed it: It hath been often questioned, what was the greatest favour that ever Almighty God did for man? Some preferre *Creation* wherein Man received his being, and excellent endowments: Some *Redemption*, wherein man is recovered to a better and surer estate than he enjoyed in *Creation*: but of question to bee a *Iedidiah*, beloved of God, to be *neere* to God as his children, as his Spouse; is the comprehension of all that can bee said or thought of the happinesse of the people. And if you looke into the Scriptures, you shal see that Gods love to his peculiar people, is such a love as carries with it all relations: It is the love of a Father to his children, *I will bee your Father, and you shall be my Sonnes, and Daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.* 2 Cor. 6. It is the love that a man beares to the Wife of his bosome: *I will marry thee to me in righteousness, and truth and mercy.* Hof. 2. It is the love of a friend; *I have called you my friends*: And Joh. 14. *Abraham*, the Father of all that are in Covenant, hee was stiled, *The friend of God.*

And from this interest in God flow innumerable priviledges, for being thus beloved of God, & precious to him, it followes that they are accepted in their services, that all their sinnes are pardoned, and that they have liberty to aske any thing that is good for them. When *Solomon* was beloved of God, 2 King. 3. 5. God bids him, *Aske what I shall doe for thee*: It is but aske and have. And this is the confidence that 1 Joh. 5. 14.

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we have in him, that if wee aske any thing according to his will, he heareth us. They have friendship with all his friends: In Zach. 8. 23. *Ten men shall lay hold upon the skirt of one that is a Jew, of whom they be able to say, We have heard that God is with you.* Indeed, to have God thus making himselfe over to a people, to be their portion, to love them, and to own them, is not only an heaven upon earth, but the very heaven of heavens.

2 Of Gods
afflicting
and prof-
pering all
them.

1 Chr. 11.

Gen 39.

Iob 22. 28

Pro. 16. 3.

Psalme 1.

Isa. 26. 12.

Secondly, Gods presence with a people in his Covenant, implies Gods assisting them, & prospering all the works they put their hands unto. This is the ordinary expression of the Scripture: Every thing prospers, where God is. It is said of David, *whithersoever (Saul) sent him, he prospered: for God was with him.* Every house where Joseph came prospered, *for God was with him.* In all undertakings, in all Counsels for wars, for peace, for trade, &c. Gods aide and assistance comes in. If they decree a thing, *God will establish it.* If they commit their worke to him, *the very thoughts of their hearts shall be established; Whatsoever they doe, God will make it to prosper. Thou O Lord, workest all our workes for us.*

Psal. 127.

Hag. 1. 6. 9

Whereas now if God be absent, all mens endeavors are to no purpose in any kind. *Except the Lord build the house, they labour but in vaine that build it.* It is to no purpose to plough that field that God will have lye fallow. Ye earne much saith God, but it comes to nothing, ye sow much & bring in little, ye eat & have not enough, ye drink & are not filled; he that earneth wages, puts it into a bottomles purse. What was the reason? the Lord blasted all. And it must needs be so, all the second causes work only by ver-

tue

tue of the first, the great wheele carries on al the other.

A notable example of this, that *Gods presence* is mans prosperity, we have in *Hag. 2.* where when God had told them that the reason of al their ill successe in their enterprizes came from *Gods* withstanding from them for their unfaithfull walking with him in the matter of rebuilding his house, & that thereupon the people were stirred up to consider their waies, and to build *Gods Temple*, the Lord tells them, *viz. 18.* that though their seed was not yet in their Barnes, nor any of their trees had brought forth their burthen; and so for ought they could see, they were like to have as hard a yeare as before: yet now, saith the Lord, *from this day I will blesse you.* Now you shal have a crop, that there shal not be roome enough to receive it: for if they would build his *Temple*, he would come and dwell with them.

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Thirdly, *Gods presence* in his Covenant implies his protection, and defence of that people against all enemies. It is said of *Ioseph*, he went into *Egypt*, he was sold for a slave: but saith the Text, *God was with him, and delivered him out of his afflictions*: None could hurt him, while God was with him. Abundance of excellent Scriptures speaks this truth. Observe two or three comparisons which the Holy Ghost frequently useth, in *Isay 4.* the latter end, the Lord speaks thus of the Churches of the *Gentiles*, that hee would create upon all the Assemblies (upon all the places where the people should assemble to serve him) a pillar of a Cloud, and a fire to keepe them safe day and night: for upon all the glory shall bee a defence. Marke, *Gods presence* in his Ordinances is their *Glory*, and upon all the *Glory* God would Create a defence. Hee compareth Himselfe to a

Of Gods protecting and defending of them.
Act 7 9.

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Shield, *I am thy shield*. Now the nature of a Shield is to take all the blowes, that the body cannot be hurt. till the Shield be pierced through. In *Nach. 2.5.* God saith he will be a *mall of fire round about them*: alluding to the customes of Travellers in waste wildernesses, who used to make fires round about them in the night, and then none of the wild beasts durst come neere them; such a defence is God to his people: And he often saith, he beares *them upon Eagles wings*. Some observe, that other birds carry their young ones in their clawes, (and then the young ones may be killed, and the old one not hurt) but the Eagle carries her young upon her backe, upon her wings, and so they cannot be hurt till she be shot through. Excellent is that expression in *Isay the 46.* where God comparing himselfe with the Idols of the Heathens, speaks to this purpose, *Their Idols must be borne*: but God beares his people: They must be *set in their place*, and bee kept least they be stolne or broken: they must defend their gods, but *Iehovah* defends his people: In many places God calles himselfe the Watch-man of his people, the Leader of them, the defender of them: all signifyng thus much, that the safety and defence of his people rests upon his presence with them.

Some where I have read a Dialogue betwixt a *Jew* and a *Heathen*: after the *Jewes* returned from the Captivity, all the Nations round about them (being enemies to them) a *Pagan* asked a *Jew* how they could have any hope of safety: because (saith he) every one of us is as one silly sheep compassed about with fifty Wolves. I, but saith the *Jew*, wee are kept by a shepherd that can kill these fifty Wolves when hee pleaseth. This God, where ever he comes, is the protector
of

of his people; who if hee speaks but the word, all the enemies of his people are consumed and brought to nothing. And this is the summe of all *Balaams* answer to *Balaac*, *Numb. 23.* and *24.* that neither force nor fraud could hurt the people of *Israel* while God was with them.

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On the other side, if God leave a people, all their strength is gone, as *Sampson* was when his Lockes were cut off. A notable instance of this you shall find in *Ier. 37.* God was then withdrawing from his people, tooke away the signes of his presence, and told them they should bee delivered up into the hands of the *Caldeans*; they thought yet to hold it out. But saith the Prophet, *If ye had smitten all the Armie of the Chal-* Verse 10.
deans, and none of them had beene left but a few wounded men, they should come and burne your City. *Amaziah's* 2 Chr. 37.
case also is most famous; he had Warre with a great company of malicious neighbour Princes that hated him, and he hires 100000 valiant men of *Israel*, and joynes them with his owne forces: But there comes a Prophet, and bids him send these 100000 people back; why? for *God is not with the Armies of Israel*; As if he had said, *Amaziah*, it were all one for thee to carry 100000 wisps of straw, or a hundred thousand dead Carcasses into the Field to fight, as a hundred thousand valiant men, if God bee not with them.

While God was with *Sampson*, he could carry the gates of a City upon his shoulders; when God left him, when his Lockes were cut (which were a pledge of Gods presence) then they took him and made a foole of him at their pleasure.

If you be not yet satisfied, that all these three things
are

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tisme.* are implied in *Gods presence*: observe further that not
onely of *Jehovah*, but even of all the *Idoll gods of the
Nations*, the like things are spoken.

As first, they are said to be *fathers and friends* of the
people that worshipped them. Thus the people of
Ier. 48. 46. *Moab* who worshipped *Chemosh*, are stiled the people
of *Chemosh*. When *Judah* joyned himselfe in marriage
Psal. 2. 11 with *Idolaters*, God saith of him, *Hee hath taken the
daughter of a strange God*: And else where when God
chargeth his people with *Idolatry*, the indictment
Ier. 2. 27. runs thus; They say to a stock, thou art my Father;
that is, thou art my God; as neere unto me as a father
to his Children.

Secondly, all their *prosperity* was said to come from
their gods supposedly present amongst them, and propi-
tious to them. *Wilt thou not possesse that which
Chemosh thy god gives thee to possesse?* said *Jephthah*
Judg. 11. to the King of *Ammon*, who tooke *Chemosh* for his
24. God.

Thirdly, their safety, their *victories* are ever attri-
buted to their gods whom they tooke to bee among
them; *Our God hath delivered into our hands* (*Sampson*)
Judg 16. *our enemy*. And the attempts against the Heathen,
24. are said to be made against their gods: as in *Isaiah* 46.
2. where there is a prophesie of the taking of *Babylon*
by *Cyrus*, it is thus expressed, *Bell boweth downe,
Nebo stoopeth, &c. Their Gods are gone into Captivitie.*
So in 2 *Kings* 18. 34. *Rabshakeh* vants, that in his
Masters name, *Where are the gods of Hamath, & of Ar-
pad, &c.* And it is observed as an ordinary practise of
the *Romans*, that when they came to besiege any Ci-
ty, they would first intreate the Gods of that City to
leave the protection of it, and come over to them:

as who should say, leave you off their protection, and then let us alone with them : So then, the summe of all this put together, amounts to thus much, that *Gods presence* in his *Covenant* with any people implies that they are *dearly beloved* of him, that he *works all their works for them*, and *shields and defends* them against all their enemies.

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happinesse.*

I come now to the *Application* of it, wherein (because I chiefly intend the next point, the *Condition of Gods presence*) I will briefly make two or three *Collections* onely, which I conceive may be most seasonable and sutable to your office, and to the occasion of your meeting here this day.

First, is it so, that the *glory and happines* of a nation stands in the *presence of God* in his *Covenant*: Then, I humbly pray you all to take notice, what are the greatest evils, and who are the most desperate Traytors, against the *King, Church, and State of England* at this day. I doubt not but you have a multitude of complaints of *grievances* presented to the *Parliament House*: all (at least pretended to be) contrary to the welfare of the State: give me leave to put up one Great One; and to inform you who be the Authors of the greatest Grievances, and Evils that can possibly betide the Kingdom of England, even they that wold rob us of our God. *Solomon* saith, *A man that wast his Father, and chaseth away his mother*, is a miserable wretch. And I know, if evidence should be brought into this Honorable Assembly against any one that had deprived the King of a *Subject*, you would think him worthy of severe punishment. But higher, if you should light upon one, that should endeavour to deprive the King and Kingdom of a wife Counsellour,

Vic r. for discovery of the
greatest Tray-
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1 Use of the
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Sara. 25. 29.

Hest. 7. 5.

and States man, in the multitude wherof is the safety of the Kingdome. But higher yet, if any should be found that had lift up his hand against his Majesty, the Lords anointed, who is the *breath of the nostrils*, if any such should be discovered, would you not say of them, as she said to David, *Let the soule of my Lord be bound up in the bundle of life, and let the Lord sling the souls of his enemies as out of the middle of a sling?* yea would not every true hearted subject in the Kingdome say thus also? O but (Honorable and Beloved) they that would rob us of the glory of our King and Kingdome, that would take away all our *happinesse*, and *protection*, and *prosperitie*, that would leave as naked to our shame, that we should become a scorne and spoile, are they not worse than any of the former? You will say, *who is he?* and *where is hee that dares presume in his heart to do so?* (I pray stay for a full answer till the next point touching the *Condition of enjoying God* be unfolded: in the meane time) take this in part: I pray God there be none such met this day to fast & pray before the Lord. Every son of *Belial*, every one that is a *Rebell* against God, every one that works wickednesse, is that *wicked Haman*, that sels *Hester*, and all her people to destruction. If there be any such here, you will give me leave (being Gods Minister, and your Servant) to discharge my Office faithfully. Should there be but one such, I say, among you that are called together to be the *Repairers of the breaches*, to such a one let me thus speak; If thou be found to be the *Achan*, that keeps God from going out with our armies; the *Jonas*, that are ready to cast away the ship, so that there is no hope of our safety till thou be cast out; if thy conscience ac-

cuse

cuse thee that thou art a child of *Belial*, an Idolater, a superstitious person, a prophane *Esau*: lay this clove to thy heart, how miserable & wretched a man thou art, that not onely adventurest thine owne soule to most certain ruine in opposing the Lord; but, as another *Sylla*, thou pluckest out thy fathers purple haire, and deprivest the Kingdom of the glory of it: so that it may be written upon thy Grave-stone, *This man was the ruine of his King and Countrey.*

1 Use of the
Churches
happinesse.

Iudg. 18. 24

And for the Lords sake (Honorable and Beloved) take it to heart, and lay it up with you, that if *Gods* presence be our glory, then those that would rob us of it are our greatest enemies. Think of them all, as he (upon lesse ground) said of the Children of *Dan*, *You have taken away my God, and what have I more.*

And secondly, let me beseech you all in this your great Nationall Council, and Assembly, to take seriously into your thoughts, what may be the best way of *lengthening out our tranquility*. Beloved, all the Nations in *Christendome* have been in grievous perplexities many yeers round about us: we have bin hitherto kept as another Land of *Goshen*, where light hath still shined, when all others have been in darkness. And I know the hearts of some of you have sadly expected when God should come & erect his *Iustice* seat among us, or give the sword a Commission against us: now you are met for this very thing, to provide for our welfare: for the Lords sake take care to keep him with us: if he go, all goes: we can never light our Candle, if this Sun be set: we shall never fill our Buckets, if this Fountain be shut up. All your counsels and advising will be nothing, if God say, *I will stay no longer in England*: We shall then be a

2 Use of the
Churches
happinesse. di
re. A. on how
to lengthen
out our happi-
nesse.

Isa. 37. 36

3 Use of the
Churches
happinesse.

spoil to any enemy; a few unarmed men will be too hard for us all.

It is recorded of the *Palladium* in *Troy*, that while that Image remained there, the City was impregnable, and that till the *Greeks* lighted on that stratagem to steal that Idoll away, they could never win the City. What ever fancy there was in that, you know how much it concerns us to keep our God with us; let your main care be to fix and settle him therefore among us, and then we are safe: if you let him go, we are an undone people.

3 Use of the
Churches hap-
pinesse. A
ground of pro-
tection in any
undertaking for
God.

Thirdly, if *Gods presence* in his Covenant be the *glory & safety* of a people; then may all of you, undertaking any service for God, and his glory, most comfortably and securely rest on God to defend and *protect you* against all dangers. It is no question but your enemies are mighty, malicious, and cunning; and it may be they are digging as deep as Hell for counsell to do you mischief in this great way and work that you are in. But while *you are with God, God will be with you*. Are not *five sparrows sold for a farthing*, saith our Saviour? Are not you more worth than all the Sparrows in the world? are you not in *Gods work*? As *Caleb* said, The Lord is with us, fear not them. *They shall all be bread for us*. Go on boldly, use what providence you can to prevent dangers, but comfortably remember, that *the Name of the Lord is a strong Tower, the righteous run to it, and are safe*.

Num. 14. 9.

Prov. 18. 10.
Expof. in Isa.
30. ver. 15.

I will conclude this with a story of *Luther*, which he tells of a Bp. of *Magdenburg*. A Duke of *Saxony* prepared war against him: the Bishop hearing of it, falls to praying, reforming of his Church, and amending what was amisse. One of the Dukes spies then

in

in that City, when he saw him make no preparation for defence, came and asked him, if he did not heare what the Duke was preparing against him? Yes, saith he, I do; but *Ego curabo Ecclesiam meam, & Deus pro me pugnabit*: I must look to work, and the defence of me belongs to God; which when the Duke heard, he disbanded his forces, and acknowledged that he should prove too weake to deale with that man that ingaged God in the quarrell against him. So follow you on the work, be ye for the Lord, and comfortably rest your selves under Gods wing, to prosper and protect you. So much for their present happinesse, *The Lord is with you.*

*The condition
of enjoying
that happines*

I proceed now to the second part, the condition upon which this happinesse is to be enjoyed: *for God is with you, while you are with him.* This Adverb *while*, *implies.*

The second
part, viz. The
Condition
of enjoying
that happines.

First, the *duration of time*, how long God will be with you, so long as you are with God; so long and no longer; for so it is used in the very next words of the Text, *if ye seek him, he will be found of you: but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you.* So David saith to Solomon, *Know thou the God of thy fathers, and serve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing minde: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever.*

1 Chron. 28. 9.

Secondly, *while* signifieth likewise the Degree and measure of Gods presence. This is the beame by which GOD weighes out his presence, the Standard whereby he measures it; that is, in what degree people are with God, in that degree he is with them. If they be with God in outward formalities only, God will be with them in outward blessings only:

A Sermon preached at a Fast

The condition
of enjoying
happineſſe.

2 Chron. 28, 22.
Verſ. 7.

Verſ. 26.

if they be *with God* in all things as *Amaziah* was, but not with a perfect heart, God will be *ſo with them*: if they be *with God* absolutely & intirely as *Iſiah*, and *David*, and *Hezekiah*, &c. were *with God*, God will be *ſo with them*, fulfilling that in *Iſa. 26.* that the moſt upright God ballanceth not the wayes of the juſt: he weighs out their way, and gives them a juſt proportion; according to that in *Pſal. 18.* *With the pure, God will ſhew himſelf pure; and with the froward, he will ſhew himſelf froward*: that is, he will deal with men as they deal with him.

This is fully laid down in *Levit. 26.* where God ſaith, if they walke humbly with him, he will walke graciously to them: if they walk frowardly and ſtubbornly, and *contrary to him*, he will walk *contrary to them*: if they vex him ſeven times, he will vex them ſeven times. So in the ſeven Churches, when ſome of them had *a few things* for God, God would be with them in *a few things*. If they will have ſomething *contrary to God*, he will ever have *ſomething againſt them*: and as their wayes are to him, ſo the moſt High God will *meaſure out* himſelfe to them; and that is the *Doctrine* that I am to handle, *viz.*

2 Doct.

God will be with his people to be their glory, their portion, proſperity, and protection, juſt as they are with him.

Before I proceed further in this point, give me leave by way of Caution to remove two or three ſtumbling blocks, which lie in the way of many men.

2 Cleared of
Cavils, by a
threefold cau-
tion.

First, when you heare, that *God will be with his people as they are with God*, take heed you underſtand it not as ſome, who (that they may ſet up the rotten

Dagon

Dagon of mans *free-will*, above the *Ark* of Gods *free-grace*) do use out of such conditionall Scriptures, to argue, that God hath an *antecedent*, undetermined, uncertain, suspended purpose of doing good to a people, which is moved, changed, or determined, according to the ebbings and flowings of their carriage towards him.

*The condition
of enjoying
happinesse.*

A few words may serve in this Assembly: these *conditions* shew not the *moving cause* of Gods presence, but describe the *Subject* or *People* with whom he is present: the hand of the Diall *makes* not the Clock to go, but shews how it doth go. These *Conditions* quicken us to our duty, and tell us upon what termes we must look for *God to be with us*, but hee himself is not thereby limited, but still at liberty to work in us the *Condition* which himself requireth of us: Gods love of Friendship (which is his manifesting himself in his *Covenant*) we cannot expect, except we be *with him*; but no Law is hereby laid upon his *beneplacitum*, his free favour, whereby he *works both the will and the deed*, and causeth his people to walk in his wayes. God gives conditions to us, but takes none from us.

Secondly, much lesse need we stick at the glosse of the Papists, who out of such conditionall Scriptures use to argue our performance of the condition, *formally to merit* Gods gracious presence, & so they will have it to be rendred by him, not as a *mercifull giver*, but as a *just Judge*. The Scripture is plain to the contrary; our merit is nothing but Gods mercy: We grant indeed Gods presence to his people is a reward of their obedience; but it is a reward not of justice, but of mercy. So saith the Prophet *David*,
Thou

The condition
of enjoying
happinesse.

• Psal. 62. 12.

Thou O Lord art mercifull, for thou rewardest men according to their works.*

Thirdly, nor yet must we think, that when this Condition is required of a Nation, that it is also limited, that unlesse the universalitie of the people shall performe it, the rest cannot expect Gods presence with them: for that was never done, no not in *David*, nor in *Solomons* time. But it is chiefly meant of the Princes, Rulers, Ministers, and the face of the people, whose wayes (whether good or bad, in regard of Gods nationall proceeding with them) are ever interpreted to be the wayes of the whole body. These blocks removed, I return to the Lesson, viz. *That God is with his people while they are with him* in the sense before given. For the making this more profitable, I shall endeavour,

2 Further explicated by the resolving of a question.

Quest.

What it is to be with God.

Ans. I.

Negatively.

Isa. 58.

Micah 6.

2 Affirmatively it imports 3 things,

First, to shew you what in the Scripture language the *being of a people with God* doth imply.

Secondly, to make application of it to our selves.

First, what is it for a people to be with God.

I must shew first *negatively*, what it is not. Secondly, *positively*, what it is. First, *negatively*, it is not barely to bear Gods Name, and to be called his people; It is not meerly to draw neer to him in the externall performance of certain duties: *It is not to hang down the head like a Bulrush for a day*, though in fasting and prayer: It is not to bring *thousands of Rams, and ten thousand rivers of Oyl* before God. You know many, and many people have done all these things, yet God hath protested, *they were not with him, nor he with them.*

Secondly, *positively* and *affirmatively* what it is.

It implies these three things.

First

First, to be a holy people, a *Ieshurun*, a righteous Nation, to be those that undertake the counter-part of the Covenant, that as God makes himselfe over to be their God, and *their portion*, so they deliver themselves up to him as a people renewed and sanctified, to become *his portion*. That is a chiefe thing which the Scripture alwayes meaneth, when it speakes a people *to be with God*, that they must be a *holy people*, separated from all iniquitie unto God, as was clearly and largely opened in the morning. Read over all the book of God, and you shall never find that a people are said to come home to God, but when they put away all their abominations, throw away all their lusts and Idols *to the Moles and to the Bates*, *loathing and detesting themselves for them*, being as the *Doves in the valley*, every one mourning for their owne iniquities, fully determining and resolving never to returne to them any more. And indeed if this be not done, it is impossible for a people to *be with God*, or to endure God to *be with them*: For God is a devouring fire to wicked men; and all wicked men to him are as *Straw, Hay, Stubble*, and *Waxe*, which the nearer they are brought to the fire, the sooner they are devoured. Therefore you shall read, that the nearer wicked men have at any time beene brought to God, the greater their misery. And for my owne part I question not but if an ungodly man should be lifted up into Heaven, where God most manifesteth himselfe in glory, he would there be most miserable *Clemens Alexandrius* speakes of a Temple, upon which was written, *No unholy thing must come neare this place*. This is Gods very inscription. *Hab. 1. 13. Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not looke on iniquity.*

The condition of enjoying happiness.

1. To be an holy people
Deu. 28.

Isa. 2.
Hos. 14.
Eze 7. 16.

The con-
dition of
enjoying
happines.

Looke over all the Epistles in the new Testament, and you shall finde, that however the externall profession of Christianity admits men to the externall priviledges of Gods presence, yet unlesse they be inwardly renewed and sanctified, there is no being nigh to God, *James 4. 8. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you: Cleanse your hands ye sinners, and purge your hearts, &c.*

This is most cleare in that great worke of mans *Redemption* by Jesus Christ: when God had created man holy and righteous, God delighted to be nigh unto him: but so soon as inquiry was found in him, there was a wall of separation buile, and a gulfe made, that never could be filled up, till the Lord Jesus Christ by his infinite sufferings did it: And when that worke is done by Christ, the Lord will not communicate his Christ to any soule in the World, but upon these absolute termes, (and God hath sworn that it shall be so) that so soone as he hath delivered them, and brought them near to himselfe, in calling them to participate that Redemption, *they should serve him in Holinesse and Righteousnesse all the dayes of their life.* This is the first thing, they must be a *holy people.*

Lu. 1.

2 To be
true wor-
shippers
of God
in puri-

secondly, to be with God, is to be true Worshippers of him, maintaining the purity of his Ordinances from Idolatry and Superstition. This is abundantly proved *Nose: 11. 12. Ephraim (saith the Lord compasseth me. One would have thought that Ephraim was neare to God, when hee compassed him: But saith God, He compasseth me with lies. What is that? with Idolatry, for it is usually expressed in the old Testament, that Idols are lies, and lies are put for Idols: as in Isa. 49, 20.*

Is there not a lie in my right hand? Thus Ephraim *The condition of*
 (that is the ten Tribes) *compasseth me*, saith the Lord, *but Judah* *enjoying*
remains faithfull with God, therefore he *happines*
 ruleth with the Saints. What was *Judahs* faithfulness? it was her keeping of the marriage Covenant with more care; when in *Hezekiashs* time (to which the Prophet referreth) Religion was reformed and advanced, then *Judah* was faithfull with God. For the more full understanding of this second branch, let me commend one observation to you concerning all the Kings of *Israel* and *Judah* after *Solomons* time; the Scripture sets downe a character of every one of them, that all the world might know what judgement God had of them. You shall find that of all the Kings of *Israel* (though there were some very brave men, yet) there is not one of them that God acknowledged to have walked with him, because they were all *feroboamites*, worshippers of the Golden Calves. And when he speakes of any King of *Judah*, he ever singles out one thing as the chiefe matter of his commendation; and that is, how he stood affected in point of Religion: *Such a man was upright with God*: the meaning is, all his dayes he maintained Gods worship. And let me tell you some of their moralities were no better then they should be. *Asa* in the Text was a cholerick passionate man, and covetous in his old age, and many other weaknesses were found in him; yet because he went thorough-stitch in the Reformation of Religion, *Asas* heart was said to be upright with God all his dayes. With this God useth to cover all their infirmities as with a veile.

But if any of the good Kings did but halt in this point, God hath left it upon record, as a blot upon

The condition of their honours, therefore are they blamed, if (through their default) the high places were not taken away, though the Idolls set up in those places were removed. And in enjoying happiness.

Rev. 14. 4.

the new Testament, throughout all the time of Antichrists apostasie, the true Church of Christ, that walked with him aright, are described by this Character, that they are a virgin company, *not defiled with women*, that is, they were never guilty of the spirituall pollutions of that Apostaticall Church of Rome. This was *to bee with the Lamb*, and *to follow him wheresoever he goeth*. That is the second to keep close to God in his worship.

3. To bee

in Gods

side in all

Causes.

Ex. 32. 26

1 Kin. 12.

Thirdly, *to be with God*, is to be on Gods side; to bee engaged in Gods cause, to appeare in those things wherein God looks that all his friends should stand for him. When the Levites would *know neither father nor mother*, but *slay every man his brother, or companion, or neighbour*, that they might avenge Gods quarrell; this was to be on Gods side. When Elias was zealous for God, at a time wherein all the Kingdome (as hee thought) played the Apostates: when Phinehas goes with his lavelin, and executes vengeance on Zimri and Cosbi, when men stand in the gap: when (in a word) a people are for God and his cause, as Iehoshaphat said he was for Ahab, *I am as thou art, and my people as thy people*: My horses as thy horses, and my Chariots as thy Chariots, this is *to be with God*.

Nam 25.

Eze 22.

30.

2 Chron

18. 1.

And indeed if this be wanting, people cannot be interpreted *to be with God*, because God is not acknowledged in his due place; unlesse they be for him with all their hearts, and with all their soule, and with all their strength, when he hath most need of them. If a woman will doe many things for her husband,

yet

yet if her heart goe more after her Puppets, her clothes, her servants, than after him, especially in times of his necessitie, her heart cannot be interpreted to be with her husband, because he is not acknowledged in the due place of an husband. So if there be any thing, any cause, any person, that we rather ingage our selves for, than for God and his cause, we cannot be said to be with God.

The condition of enjoying happiness.

So now you have the meaning of the *Condition of enjoying God, while ye are with him*: It is,

1 To be reconciled to God, and to walk with him as an holy people.

2 To continue with him in the purity of his worship.

3 To stand by him in every cause, which doth concerne his glory.

The deductions which might flow from this Doctrine for our use, are many; I shall confine my selfe to these two, as being most futable and seasonable to the time, and your worke.

First, matter of *Humiliation*, and mourning before God for time past.

Secondly, matter of *Dutie*, for time to come.

For the first, Honourable and Beloved, you stand this day before the Lord to afflict your soules and (though you be the chosen men of your Tribes, lifted up above your brethren) yet you are now called; not onely to bemoane your owne iniquities, but to beare the iniquitie of the whole Kingdome. And (methinkes) I looke upon you, as upon the Prophet *Ezekiel*, when he was to beare the iniquitie of the house of *Israel* and *Judah*, he was to lye upon his side, and to eate his bread made of *Wheate*, and *Barley*, and *Beanes*, *Lentiles*, and *Fitches*, miserable

Vse 1. Of the second point, which is, a Vse of deep humiliation.

Ezek. 4.

1 Use of coarse bread, and baked with the dung of man, and to
 the se- drinke a little water for many dayes together. How
 cond sad and heavy the Prophets spirit must needs be, when
 point. he was thus to beare such a burthen, is easie to judge.
 Such a temper of spirit would this day well become
 you. And now could I but speak to you from the Lord
 how sad things there are against *England*, in this point
 of not being with God, could you with patience and
 grace heare me; and would the Lord affect my heart
 and yours in handling and hearing of them, we should
 make this place a *Bochim*, a place of weepers, the stout-
 Nahum 2 est heart would be as Queen *Huzzah*, and her *Ladies*,
 when they went into captivitie, *sabering on their*
breasts, and mourning as Doves, yea howling after the
manner of Dragons. Could I, as in a mirrour, set be-
 fore your eyes, how infinitely farre off the body of
 this Kingdome is from *being with the Lord*, we should
 wonder that the Lord hath not wholly forsaken us
 long agoe; and that in stead of enjoying this liberty
 of pleading with God for our lives, for our Prince
 and Countrey, and for whatsoever is precious to us,
 we are left like unto *Sodom*, and made like unto *Gomor-
 rah*. Take a view of all the three particulars mentio-
 ned in the point.

Because
 we ate

1 Not a
 holy peo-
 ple.

First, are we *an holy people*? (I am now pleading
 Gods cause, and though a poore unworthy man, I
 stand betwixt God and a Kingdome) I aske againe,
 Are we *an holy people*? Are our Princes, our Rulers,
 our Magistrates, our Ministers, and the body of the
 people *holy*? Doe we walke according to the rules
 of Christianitie, the sum whercof for the practicall
 part is laid downe in the ten Commandements, and
 those expositions that our Lord gives of them? Doe

we walke thus? I know there is no man here so ignorant as to imagine that wee doe. Alas! the Prophets speech too well be fits us: *Ab! sinfull Nation, a people laden with iniquitie, a seed of evil doers, Children that are corrupters: The whole head is sicke, the whole heart is faint: from the sole of the foot, even to the head, there is no soundnesse in it, but wounds, and bruises, and putrified sores, Egypt was never more bespread with Locusts and Frogges, than our Kingdome is with horrible prophanenesse, uncleannesse, oppression, deceit, and whatsoever is a stench in the Lords nostrills. The generality of people wearing indeed the Lords Liverie, (being Christened) and doing the Devills worke all the yeare long. Nay, is there any thing this day so hated as holinesse? Have we not gotten termes to scoffe down all goodnes? Is not almost every man who will not swear and be drunke, and be deboyft as a Turke, or worse, cryed downe with the odious name of a Puritan? That as *Ambrose* said of *Palinus*, a young Noble man of *Rome*, at whom when he was converted to Christ, and left the Worlds glory, to carry Christs Crosse, there was more wondring then if a Mule had cast a Foale. And as *Bede* said of the ancient *Britains*, immediately before their destruction by the *Saxons*, that they were come to that height of wickednesse, as to cast *Odium in Religionis professores tanquam in adversarios*. God knowes many thousands are guilty of the same in this Land, this day: the measure of our iniquity seemes to be more than full. O that our hearts could this day bleed for it!*

Secondly; see what wonderfull cause we have to be abased for all the injury the Land stands guilty of in abusing God in the point of his *Worship*, which is the

The use of the second point.

Mat. 1.

² Neg
with God
in the
matter of
his Wor-
ship.

1 Use of the defiling of the marriage bed betwixt God and his people. God hath visited all the reformed Churches, brought most of them almost to nothing: yet, passe over & see, whether ever any of them have provoked the Lord in this kind so much as we have done. Let me name foure or five things, too much practised, and too little lamented: God in mercy effect our hearts with them this day.

First, the Articles of our faith, the *depositum*, the good thing committed to us, which wee received from our fore Fathers, and should transmit entire to our posterity: Oh the miserable defection, that we have made from God, adulterating thereof! Tell me, beloved, what one point, what one Article of Faith, controverted betwixt us and the Church of Rome is there, that our Pulpits, and presses, and University Acts, have not been bold with all: as if we were weary of the Truth which God hath committed to us: as if indeed, for our not receiving the truth in love, God were giving the Nation up to *beleeve lies*.

Secondly, let me instance in the Lords Day; a day which is a signe betwixt God and his people, that *He is their God that sanctifieth them*. That as Idoll-worshippers are known by keeping holidays to their gods, so Gods people are known to be his people, by observing of his *Holy day*.

It is most true, that our ancient Doctrine established, is purer in this point than can be found in most of the Churches, and excellent Lawes we have for the backing of it: but I beleeve there hath not been in all the Christian World such high affronts offered to the *Lords day*, as of late hath been in *England*, and (I am confident) they all lie in the Deck charged, as the sin of the

the Nation, till by some publik Act, the fourth ^{1 Use of} Commandement bee restored to its due place and ^{the se-} honour. ^{cond}

Thirdly, goe to another branch, the point of ^{point.} *preaching the Word.* The preaching of the Word is the *Scepter* of Christs Kingdome, the *glory* of a Nation, the *Chariot* upon which life and salvation comes riding: such a treasure as that any wise Merchant would sell all to buy the field wherein this treasure lyes. O that God would humble *England* for the great abuse of this invaluable mercy! What little care hath the State in generall taken to provide that *Christ* might ride in Triumph upon his *white horse*: that the Word of God might spread into every corner of the Land? But, Oh the cruelty that hath been offered to many poore Congregations, in taking away the bread of Life from their mouthes, without any pity! as if the starving and murthering of soules, for which *Jesus Christ* shed his blood, were a matter of no moment. And oh the spoile, and havöck that hath beene made among many faithfull and painfull Ministers, for such trifles as will not endure tryall in the Day of the Lords appearing? Could wee as in a mirrour, behold the great guilt wee lie under for these things, and apprehend what great wrath is kindled against the Kingdome for them, how would our hearts tremble before God this day?

Fourthly, but above all, the extream daring, bold audaciousnesse of a generation of men, that have adventured as much as in them lies, to corrupt Gods worship, that not only rejoyce to see the Idolatry and Superstition of *Rome* practised by others,

1 Use of
the se-
cond
point.

but have dared to set *their thresholds by Gods threshold*, and to dresse out all Gods worship, according to their own fancies, things too apparent to need any further reproofe.

It may be some may think, this is no great matter, and much complaint need not be made against it: a few distinctions will salve all that is done to quit it from Idolatry and Superstition. But as *Lodovicus Vives* saith of the *Papists* in his dayes, that for ought he saw, they (in effect) gave the same reverence to their Saints, which the *Pagans* did to their gods: So I may truly say of these men, (that notwithstanding all their distinctions) little differences is to be found betwixt their practice, and the superstitions and Idolatries of the Church of *Rome*.

Will some say, let it be granted that men have bin too blame (as doubtlesse multitudes have been too bold) in this kinde, yet God forbid that wee should judge so farre, as to make them as odious to God, as if they were the bringers of Gods wrath upon the Nation, as if they were as bad as whoremongers, or blasphemers; or that we should offer to compare them with the grosse Idolaters of the Church of *Rome*: God forbid such a stain should be cast upon them. Thus some men draw a fine veile over these foule enormities.

Good Lord, that the glorious light of the Gospel in eightry two yeers, should not take away this filme from the eyes of men! Judge you the case, you that are Husbands, you that have a spirit of jealousy, bee yee Arbitrators betweene the Lord and this Generation and say, if a wanton looke in your owne wife, if a whorish dresse, if the giving, or receiving of
love

love tokens, if the least degrees of dalliance would not render your owne wife more abominable to you, than the knowne fornication, or adultery of any other woman whatsoever? Doe you not know that the Church of Christ is this Spouse? Doe you not know that God is more easily provoked by a people among whom he walks, than by any other people whatsoever? I beseech you lay these things to heart.

1 Use of
the se-
cond
point.

Exo. 33 5.

And let the remembrance of this day help you in it. This day eighty two yeers agoe, the Lord set up the Gospel among us, and took us to be a nation in Covenant with him. Oh the progresse that some nations would have made! The thankfulness and fruitfulness that some people would have attained to in so long a time! but that we should grow worse and worse in point of Gods worship, that we should hanker after Idolatry, and Superstition, and fall away worse than any of our neighbours, that God hath visited so severely: what shall we say, when God comes to reckon with us for these things?

Fittly, adde the horrible profanation of the holy Sacrament of the Lords Supper, the promiscuous multitude every where, not only allowed, but even compelled to the receiving of it: Multitudes of whom, know not whether Christ were a man or a woman, nor how many Gods there be; multitudes wallowing in all profaneness and licentiousness, yet if they professe that they be no Papists, almost every where they are admitted to the polluting of these reverend Mysteries, as if we would compell the Lord to depart away from us.

Ezek. 8.
3 Not
with God
as inga-
ged in his
cause.

And then, if we should take in the third branch of

the second point.
 1 Use of *ingaging our selves in Gods cause*, how little zeale is there for Cod? The wrongs and cruelties that are done to many, the teares of the afflicted, and oppressed; and so few that will open their mōuthes or appeare to plead any cause which GOD, will own, abundantly proclaimeth this. Verily, beloved, were you all as innocent as *Ezra* was of the Fact among the *Jewes*, of the wretchednesse of the people of *Israel*: If you did know what God looks for at your hands this day, you would rent the very Caule of your hearts before the Lord, and sit downe with him astonished, and refused to bee comforted; and wonder that God hath not wholly left us, and delivered up our glory as a spoyle, and severely revenged the quarrell of his Covenant.

Ezra. 9.

But to come neerer yet, and bring it home into your owne bosomes; what if you your selves bee guilty of these things? You that are the flower of your Tribes, the chiefe of the Thousands of *England*: You that are lifted up above your Brethren, whom God hath made the Head, and not the Taile of the places where you live, when God might have left you to bee *hewers of Wood*, and *drawers of water*. And hee hath made some of you Noblemen, some Knights, and Gentlemen, and now called you to be the Repairers of our breach, to heale and prevent our ruine. What if you your selves have a chief hand in these transgressions? What if among you be found swearers, cursers, adulterers, drunkards, haters of Gods wayes, scornors of his Children, and his Ordinances, men who goe in your sinfull wayes, and resolve to doe

doe so: and because you are great, will therefore be 1 *Use of*
 children of *Belial*, refusing to carry Gods yoke what *the se-*
 if any such should be there? The Lord of heaven for- *cond*
 bid. But if there should be any such, I beseech you *point.*
 thinke what a *Magor-mizzabib*, what a terrour round
 about you there will bee, when God comes to finde
 you, and to reckon with you!

Are you come to *Fast*, and *Pray* before the Lord?
 Doe you come to stand betwixt God and the Na-
 tion, when you wollow in such wayes as GODS
 soule abhorres: Doe you such things as are Re-
 bellion against God, and pull downe his vengeance
 on us? Doe you call this an *acceptable Day*?
 Doe you thinke the Lord will accept of any service
 at your hands? Be ashamed, and confounded, and
 never rise up till God have broken your hearts, and
 spoken peace to you in the blood of Christ. Let
 deepe humbling thoughts for these things, bee now
 to your soules as those bitter Hearbs wherewith
 the *Israelites* of old did eat the *Passover*. But if
 you make nothing of all this, but will goe on care-
 lessly, and walke contrary to GOD, GOD
 will walke contrary to you, the LORD will
 not be with you. This is the first use for *Humilia-*
tion.

Secondly, I adde but another of *Exhortation*, 2 *Use of*
 and I have done: (I beseech you pardon the Liber- *the se-*
 tie, which your call gives mee; I were unworthy *cond*
 ever to speake more, if I should not now speake *point.*
 freely.) You stand all this day before the Lord, *Exhorta-*
 and have beene exercised in the Duties of *Fast-* *tion con-*
ing, and *Prayer*: I beseech you tell me in Gods *sisting of*
 presence (or rather answer God in your owne *three*
 hearts) *branches.*

2 Use of hearts) what was the thing you propounded to
 the se- your selves ? was it to keep a day t r Formality ?
 cond because it is now a received thing in England, in the
 point. beginning of a *Parliament* to keep a Fast ? Or was
 it, that by hanging the head as a *Bulrush* for a d y, you
 might expiate your sinnes with God, and take a new
Ticket to sinne againe ? As it was said of *Lewis* the
 eleventh, that he would kisse his *Crucifix* when hee
 had done evill, and then God and he were friends,
 and he might goe on in his old way againe. If it bee
 so, expect a sad reckoning for this dayes work: you
 deale with a God that will not be mocked by the
 greatest of you.

You shall read in *Ezek. 14.* divers of the *Elders*
 came to the Prophet to inquire of God. *These men,*
saith God, have set up their Idols in their hearts, and
 they come to enquire of mee : Tell them I will an-
 swer them with witnessse, *I will set my face against*
them. and make them a signe, and a Proverb. So I say
 from God to the greatest of you, who brought your
 sinnes in the morning, and purpose to returne to them
 in the evening, and keepe such a solemne d y onely
 for a *formality*, and there an end, God will reckon with
 you for it.

But if you desire indeed to meet God, and to bee
with God, that God may be *with you,* then weigh what
 I shall say from the Lord; and if it appeare to be his
 will, then (as you were taught in the morning) draw
 it up into a Covenant; Covenant betwixt God and
 your soules, come, and receive the Sacrament upon it,
 and lie at Gods feet to obtain grace for performance.
 My exhortation shall bee answerable to the three
 branches of the Doctrine.

First,

First, resolve every one of you for his owne part ^{1 Use of} to turne to God, to cast out all your abominations, ^{the se-} never to turn to any of your wicked wayes from this ^{cond} day forward. It may be this motion seemes harsh, ^{point.} and will not easily down: (because in our wretched dayes, as the *Turks* use to account all Fooles to bee Saints for men with us account all Saints to be fools.) But this must be done: necessary things fall not under deliberation. To live in hell you would not: to live with God you cannot: hard it will be to be damned; impossible it will to bee saved, unlesse with full purpose of heart you turne to God, and become new creatures. I must say to you as the Prince of *Orange* said to his souldiers at the battell of *Newport*, when they had the Sea on the one side, and the *Spaniards* on the other: If (saith he) you will live, you must either eat up these *Spaniards*, or drink up this Sea: So must you, either conquer your lusts, eat up the *Spaniards*, or drink up the Sea, the devouring Gulfe of Gods wrath: and none of you know how soon this time may come, that will ye, nill ye, ye must be brought neer to God, who is a devouring fire, utterly to consume you, if you be *Straw and Stubble*, or to glorifie you if you be *Gold*.

The *Pagan* King of *Nineve* saw this, that without turning every man from the wickednesse that was in his owne hands, there could not be hope of escaping the wrath of God. And therefore you who are Christ: cannot expect that God should be with you in any thing that you take in hand: till this bee done, God will not only loath you, but the works of your hands also.

Secondly, this done, be with God in matters of
Reli-

7 To
turn unto
God as
an holy
people.

2 Be with
God in
matters of
Religion

2 Use of Religion : my meaning plainly is this : bee

the se- First, such as cleave to the purity of his worship
cond in your own practice.

point. And then in your great *Counsell*, bee yee purgers
Hag. 2. and preservers of our Religion. Looke thoroughly
11, 12 &c what is amisse, and pluck up every plant that God
hath not planted; throw to the *Moales* and to the
Bats, every rag that hath not Gods stamp and name
upon it. That it may be said of this *Parliament* in
matter of Religion, as it is said of *Iosiah*, *There was ne-
ver any like him before him, nor any after him*: So there
was never any *Parliament* before this, nor never any
after it, that followed the Lord with all their heart, and
all their soule, and all their might, according to all the
will of God.

Motives
thereunto
from the
second
command-
ment.

And to provoke you, give me leave to give you a
briefe view of the hedge that God hath made about
the second Commandement. The intent of that
Commandement is, that Gods people should worship
him with his own worship, and his own Ordinances,
and never dare to tender to him the devices and tra-
ditions of men for a homage. Now the Lord know-
ing the itch, and pronenesse in men to be tampering
in the worship of God, to set their *thresholds* by his
threshold, hath set such a hedge about it, that if a man
did consider it seriously, hee could not but admire
that ever mortall man should dare in the matter of
Gods worship, to meddle any jot further than the
Lord himselfe hath commanded: it standing like the
Cherubims, and the flaming Sword, which turned
every way to keep the way of the Tree of Life.

Gen. 1. 24.

First, hee is a *jealous God*, as if he should say, the
matter of my worship is to me as the Marriage bed;
and

and I am a Husband easily provoked to *jealousie*, 2 *Vse of the*
 which is * *the rage of a man, and will accept no ransom.* *second point.*

Secondly, all such are said to hate God, *I will*
visit the sins of them that hate me. They all pretend
 that they are lovers of him, They that made men
 kisse the Calves, yet would have them sweare *Jeho-*
vah liveth. *Jeroboam* pretended nothing but respect
 to God, and to Gods people, when he set up his
 Calves: so these men pretend reverence and veneration
 to Gods Ordinances: but God protests that all
 hate him, which may appeare by the odious names
 he gives to their sinne, calling it sometimes *Re-*
bellion, as being a denying his *Soveraignty*, *Iosh. 22.*
16, 22. Sometimes *Apostasie*, *Ierem. 2. 13.* Some-
times Adultery the most unpardonable sinne betwixt
 man and wife, *Ezek. 16.* And sometimes *Blasphemy*,
Isa. 65. 7.

Thirdly, it is a sinne that hath vengeance, and pu-
 nishment intailed upon it to the *third and fourth ge-*
neration. The *Iews* say to this day, that *there was*
never any calamity betided their Nation, since their
coming out of Egypt, but there was an ounce of the
Golden Calf in it. It is a sinne that GOD fails not
 to visit upon *Children, unto the third and fourth Gene-*
ration.

But now on the other side, God will shew *mercie* to
thousands of them that love him, and keep his Comman-
delements. How is that? The Lord interprets them to
 love him that purely worship him. As a man who
 finds his wife faithfull in the marriage bed, judgeth
 that she loves him, and that her heart is one with
 his what ever other infirmities shee may have.
 Yea, they are interpreted to keep all his *Comman-*
delements.

2 Use of the
second point.

dements. God will trust them for all his Commandements, whom he finds faithfull in his worship: Ye to a *thousand Generations*; he will remember them which is longer than this wicked world shall stand. The kindnesse and faithfulnessse of them that maintain and preserve the pure Religion and worship of God, shall ever be in the sight of God for them and their posterity.

Iob 19:17.

Oh! let me helpe your reckoning in the day of the Lord, intreating you for the *Childrens sake of your owne body* to lay what I have said to heart, that you may provide that the Ordinances of God be neither taken away, nor defiled, that God may be purely worshiped in his owne way for time to come. And that by a Generation of men, who *seek onely to glory in our flesh*; we be not jugled out of our Religion, nor misled in such a way of service, as that *Gods soule should take no pleasure in us.*

Gal. 6:13.

3 Bewitch God
in every cause
of God.

Thirdly and lastly, (which is the comprehension of all the rest) *bee on Gods side*, ingage your selves in every cause which is Gods: own what God owns. As Christ said, *you shall not have mee alway*, that is, in my person, but *the poore you shall have alway*, and when you will, you may doe good to them. So I say, you have not Christ with you in his person. but you alwayes have his Cause, his Truth, his Ordinances, his Day, his Ministers, his Children, the Teares of the afflicted; all causes of Iustice and Righteousnesse, these are Gods Cause. GOD would have all his friends zealous for him, and appeare for him, his Church, and his Cause. And to inflame your hearts to this, be pleased to consider these few *incouragements.*

Motives hereunto.

First,

First, God hath deserved it at your hands, that ^{2 Use of the} you would appeare for Him, Hee hath appeared ^{second point.} for you when none could: His Soure *Iesus Christ* gave his owne soule a ranfome for your sinnes, or else you had perished in Hell for ever: Hee hath made you the *Head*, rather than the *Taile*: He hath heaped upon you Honour, Wealth, and Friends; and you can give no other reason why you are not more miserab'e then the poorest Vagrant, that wants both house and home, but onely this, that *G O D hath been on your side*. Doth not he then deserve to bee owned? They say, *Love is loves Loafstone, and loves whetstone*.

¹ God hath deserved it at your hands.

Secondly, *G O D S Cause*, his *Church*, and *Children*, have few Friends, and many Enemies, and those Enemies no Babies, but *Principalities and Powers*, Cruell, Cunning, Malicious, and unweariab'e: And more now than ever. *Satan* knowes his time is short, hee stirs up all his instruments, as if one spirit posselt them all. And is it not a shame, that the Lords friends should be more backward in his cause, than the Vassals of Satan are in their Masters?

² Gods cause hath many enemies, and few friends.

I adde thirdly, the Lord, to punish the Pride, Sloath, Hypocrisie, and Formalitie of his people, hath of late suffered the enemies of the Church to prevaile exceeding farre. The face of *Christendome* this day so miserably rent with Warres, Sedition, Heresies, and Schismes, is a most ruthfull spectacle. Who can looke upon poore *Germany*, and not even be compelled to weepe over the Booke of the *Lamentations* againe? And *G O D* knowes whose Lot is next: Little quiet I feare is to bee

³ God hath, for punishment to his Church, permitted the enemy to prevail very far.

2 Use of the
second point.

expected in *Christendome*, till the Beast his Kingdom be ruined.

Now wee know that the Lord accounts that the most seasonable time for his friends to owne his cause, when the enemies are most violent against it: then God saith, *who is on my side, who?* When the pressures of the Church are greatest, the opportunities of appearing for the LORD are most seasonable, and great are their Rewards who then stick to him. Everie one would gladly embrace a glorified CHRIST: but when the whole Councell shall reject him; then, with *Nicodemus* to plead for him, this is honourable. When hanging upon the Crosse, his Disciples runne away from him, then with *Ioseph of Arimathea* boldly before *Pilate* to shew love to him, this is acceptable.

When the *Jewes* had an exalted *Mordecai*, then the people of the Land would turne *Jewes*. The *Samaritanes* would helpe to build the Temple, when the *Persian* Emperour is a Friend to the Church: But our Lord saith, Let me have the man that will not be ashamed of mee before a froward and adulterous Generation. Marke, he doth not say gracious Generation (then no man will be ashamed of him) but in an adulterous, and froward Generation.

Fourthly, when you strike in on the LORDS side, on his Churches side, on his Causes side; you shall not onely strike in with the best side, with the best Cause, but with the most prevailing; with that side which must and shall have the victorie at the long runne. It would make a man

* Gods Cause
is the best, and
his side will
prove at last
the prevailing
party.

man never to be afraid to be engaged in a quarrell where hee is sure of the victorie. The Birk wherein *Christ*, his *Church*, and *Cause* are, may bee tossed, but can never bee drowned. *Populus Romanus sepe praelio victus, nunquam bello.* The *Romanes* lost many Battels, but they were never overcome in a set Warre; at the long runne they crushed all their enemies. So all the enemies that seeme too hard for *Christs* cause, and his *Church*, must perish. He must rule, till all his enemies be made his footstool.

2 Use of the second point.

Florus.

Psalm 110.

In *Zachary* the 12. there are foure or five admirable expressions. The Church is compared to a *Hearth of Fire* in the midst of a *Wood*. Like a *Torch of Fire* in the midst of a *Sheafe*. Whether the *Wood*, or the *Fire*, the *Torch* or the *Sheafe* will have the victorie judge ye. In verse the second, she is compared to a *Cup of Poison*, that will end them who think to devoure it. To an heaive Stone, that will return upon those to their ruine, who endeavour to carrie it away. So shall it be with all Nations that fight against the Church and cause of *Christ*: And if any man should happen to lose his life in the Lords quarrell, as the *Angel* said to *Daniel*, *He shall stand up in his lot*: He shall rise up, and follow *CHRIST*, cloathed with glorie. *Revelations* the nineteenth, the Armies in Heaven, that followed *Christs* triumphant Chariot, were such as were *holy*, and *faithfull*, and loved not their lives to the death. Would not this move any man to be on *GODS* side?

Den. 12. 13.

5 The consideration of the office and calling of this House of Parliament should provoke them to countenance others.

Lastly, (Honoured, and beloved in the Lord) let the consideration of your great place, and office that

2 Use of the
second point.

God Almighty hath called you to raise up your spirits to endeavour great things for the L O R D. For my part, I am too weak to fathome in my thoughts, what the great work is to which you are called together by God. You are met to seek the good of the Land, the good of the Church, a greater charge than the salvation of your owne soules, is put into your hands. It may be not onely our welfare, and peace, and Religion: but even the welfare of all *Christendome*, under God, depends upon your meeting. That God that might have left you (as I said) to be *hewers of wood*, and *drawers of water*, hath called you to bee *Repairers* of all our *breaches*; and the Prayers, and blessings of all G O D S people are upon you. The eyes of all the Nation, next under GOD, and our gracious Sovereign, are fixed upon you.

Oh what a mighty tye doth this put upon the soul of every one of you, to lay aside all businesse, and pleasures, and lusts, and ends of his owne, and solely to study how to advance Christs cause, and appeare where Christ would have him appeare. Your work is great, our evils are many: but be not discouraged; onely remember, that *God is with you, while you are with him*. As it is in *Zach. 4. who art thou, O great Mountaine? before my servant Zorobabel, thou shalt become a plain*. If God be with *Zorobabel*, Mountains shall become Plaines before him. God can make those things, that you apprehending as *Hydras* and *Monsters* would tremble to think of, to fall before you as the leaves of a tree.

There is a notable story of *Luther*, when hee first came out against the Pope, *Allertus Cranzius* (a Bishop

Bishop that liked well his project, but thought it impossible to bring it to passe) wrote to *Luther*, *Frater, Frater abi in cellam, & dic, Misere mei Deus*, Fryer, Fryer, goe to thy Cloyster, and say, Lord have mercie upon mee, this worke is too hard for thee; yet *Luther* wrought wonders. One *Luther* will doe great things, if God be with him: One *Parliament* may doe great things, if God bee with them.

2 Use of the
second point.

Resolve upon it this day to bee for God, make this another blessed seventeenth of *November*. But if through feare, treacherie, cowardise, pride, or sloath, you withdraw your selves from Gods work; *Deliverance shall come* to Gods people another way: and you for your part shall not onely lose your share in the comfort; but you shall bring all the guilt, and sinnes that the Nation groanes under, to stand upon your owne scorne before God. Yea, (you will think it is a great word; but I speake it not rashly) it may be more guilty, than the verie Authors of our mischiefs, who have beene firme to their owne principles, in the bringing of them in: and you contrarie to your light and office doe further them, if you not withstand them. As he who solicited an Emperour for a pardon for one that had killed two men, and received a deniall upon that very reason, that the Delinquent had twice imbrued his hands in blood; replied to the Emperour: Nay, you killed the second; for if hee had been cut off for the first, hee had never killed the other. So abundance of evils committed by private men, are not the sinnes of the Rulers and Princes at the first, but may afterward, through their connivence or want of zeale, be truly reckoned

2 *Vse of the* reckoned and accounted theirs. God forbid that you
second point. should bring so great a burden upon your own souls
 and consciences. *Vp and be doing,* and the Lord be with
 you in his cause.

Now although your wisdoms best know what is
 to be done, and it may seem unfit to prescribe such a
 Colledge of Physicians a way of a Cure: Yet give me
 leave onely to propound one thing (even the same
 which was prest in the forenoone) which I suppose
 would prove a *Catholick* remedy for all our evils, and
 the greatest means for the lengthning out of our tran-
 quillitie, and the healing of all our distempers: that
 is, the promoting, establishing, and maintaining a
 faithfull, learned, painfull, preaching Ministry: that
 every *Candlestick* may have a *Candle*, that every *Flock*
 may have a faithfull *Shepherd* to guide them. This
 is the thing I would propound to you. This was the
 course *Jeheoshaphat* took, who sent *Princes & Levites,*
 2 Chron. 17. 3 *who taught in Judah, and went about through all the*
Cities and taught the people.

Blessed be God for the light that shines among us.
 Yet I must tell you that of nine or ten thousand Pa-
 rishes, which they say are in *England*, I beleeve there
 are many thousands, which these eighty ycers have
 not had the blessing to enjoy (at the least any long
 time) a settled, faithfull, preaching Ministry. So that
 I beleeve (and I speak somewhat from experience) that
 many thousands, if not thousands of thousands, know
 not their right hand from the left, in the very princi-
 ples of the Doctrine of Christ. What ever be the
 cause, whether it be that our Laws and Constituti-
 ons are defective: whether the negligence or corrup-
 tion of our Governours; whether the want of a
 preaching

preaching maintenance, or whether all these bee the fault: Certaine it is, there hath beene hitherto a *Taxation*, somewhat which hath hindered the spreading of it. 2 V^{ce} of the second poynt.

And it is worth your most diligent enquiry, whether the neglect of this hath not beene one main cause of the ill successe of so many former *Parliaments*. Could you provide mercifully for people in this, you would make all safe, and *England* would thanke you as long as it is *England*.

To incite you, bee pleased to consider but these two things.

First, we deserve no further the name of a Christian Nation than this is done, nor any further than this is advanced. This is the Scepter whereby Christ rules: The dwelling of his Word with a people, is the greatest proofe of their owning him for their *Prince*, and his acknowledging them for his owne *Subjects*. Is any Country esteemed a part of a Princes Dominion, that is not ruled by his Lawes? Neither can any land be accounted Christs Kingdome, where the preaching of the Word, which is the *Rod of his power*, is not established. And the Lord hath ever esteemed the hinderers of his Word, to be the men that would not have Christ rule over them.

Secondly, if all the good Lawes in the world were made, without this, it would come to nothing; order what you can, leave this undone, you will never doe the thing you aime at, Magistrates and Ministers of Justice wil not execute them, and people wil not obey them. *The dark places of the Land are ever full of the habitations of wickednesse. But if Christ smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, the Wolfe shall dwell* Psal. 17.
20.
Isaiah 11.

H

with
4. &c.

with the Lambe, and the Leopard shall lye downe with the Kid, the Calfe, and the young Lyon, and the fasting together, and a little childe shall leade them. There shall nothing hurt nor destroy, where Christs Scepter rules: Your Lawes cannot give men new hearts, nor new strength; that is the priuiledge of the Lawes of Christ.

The Poets speake of excellent Musicians; who by the power of their Musicke made stones leape into Walls, Beasts to be tame, &c. This will doe more, this will take the stone out of mens hearts, this will give them a new heart; this will make all the Commandements easie; there is a kinde of omnipotencie in it. I beseech you amongst al your excellent purposes for our good, let this be the first, and chiefest: If this will not do, nothing will:

*If they hear not Moises & the Prophets,
they will not beleeve though
one rise from the
dead.*

FINIS.

LONDON,
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